

STUDENT SPOTLIGHT

Ella
"Cole"
Stokes

Hot Spring/Grant County WAGE & CCAP program (College and Career Access Program) has its first graduate – Ella "Cole" Stokes.

She met the requirements to complete the CCAP program and completed all requirements to receive the WAGE Employability Certificate. Ella is enrolled in 12 hours at College of the Ouachitas this semester. She will be attending school Tuesdays and Thursdays while working at Saline Memorial Hospital in Benton the rest of the week.

Congratulations, Ella!



Present for the presentation of Ella's Employability certificate were: Mike Kolb (Director of Community Development & Industrial Training), Brenda D. Keisler (CCAP instructor), Ella Stokes, Toisie Morgan (CCAP instructor), Dr. Blake Robertson (Vice President of Adult & Workforce Education), Jan Robertson (WAGE Coordinator)

12,000th GED® Credential Earned At Fort Smith Adult Education Center

When Debora Tart earned her GED® diploma in mid-February, it was a milestone for her and for the Fort Smith Adult Education Center. She was the center's 12,000th GED® recipient. "I immediately called my husband and my family back in California. My mom started crying. They're really proud," says Tart.

Tart dropped out of school at 17 feeling that she didn't need more school. Last July she enrolled in classes at Fort Smith Adult Education Center. Although she has had good jobs—including her current one as an office manager in a doctor's practice—she knew she needed a GED® credential to find employment in the future and to enter training to become a licensed practical nurse.

Gary Udouj, Fort Smith Adult Education Center Director, said roughly half of the student who use the center's programs and classes are pursuing a GED® diploma.

In 2007 about 1,900 enrolled in classes at the center. By 2010, with the downward turn in the economy, that number rose to approximately 3,100. Last year the number settled around 2,900. Udouj expects another surge in enrollment with industry closures in the area. Udouj also says he expects students to increase because of the changes in the GED® program scheduled for 2014. "This is big" he says. "It will be computerized and tied to the Common Core Standards and cost money."

Fort Smith Adult Education Center started as a part-time program in 1967. By 1974 it was a full-time program. "Hitting 12,000 shows how long we've been here, and how we've continued to grow," Udouj said. "It shows more adults see the value of getting their GED®."



Kaye Birkhead, GED Examiner™ at Fort Smith Adult Education Center reads instructions to student. Photo-Carrol Copeland, Fort Smith TIMES RECORD.

NEW ADULT EDUCATION DIVISION STATE STAFF MEMBER

A native of Pine Bluff, Yolanda Carman comes to ACE as a former secondary educator and a nine year veteran as a state employee from the Arkansas Educational Television Network (AETN). She holds a Masters of Education with concentrations in Adult Education and Human Resource Development Education from the University of Arkansas at Fayetteville. As an Education and Instruction Coordinator within AETN's education division, Yolanda developed and managed AETN's adult education and career education services for the state. One of Yolanda's career goals is to warrant that all adult learners have the opportunity to obtain high quality educational programs.

In her new position as Adult Education Program Advisor, Yolanda will provide technical assistance with AERIS, program supervision and evaluations, trainings, and special projects.



The Arkansas Department of Career Education funds the Adult Education Division. The Adult Education Division provides programs and services statewide.

Saline County Adult Education Center Gives Hope to Inmates

One pencil, one piece of paper, one open and attentive mind, and at least one person's belief that anyone can change through the power of education: that is all eight inmates inside the Saline County jail said they need. A chance to prove to you, their families, and most importantly themselves, that lives and communities can be transformed.

"If I learn to do something else ... when I get out, I can do something to benefit myself in a better way than coming back in here," those are the words of one of the eight inmates that sit in group atmosphere every Tuesday and Thursday night for the new GED program. Another inmate said that many "people come in here with no kind of education at all," but also added that this program "is a blessing ... and we can set goals to achieve."

The program is a partnership between the Saline County Adult Education Center and the administration of the Saline County jail. This program was started, and is maintained, at no cost to the tax-payers, Jail Administrator Lt. Don Birdsong and Sheriff Bruce Pennington said. Yvonne Dougherty, director of the SCAEC, is providing all the GED program materials, including the teachers, for free.

The inmates also get a chance to not only earn a GED — if they score 600 points or higher on the GED test — they will qualify for a full-paid two-year scholarship to Pulaski Technical College. Even if the inmate moves on from the jail to a prison facility, the inmate can still take college courses via www.pulaskitech.edu.

"According to Ms. Dougherty, the Adult Education Center will also be able to present classes free of charge that will help deputies become more proficient in their report writing skills," Pennington said. "She was very receptive to this program. She knows without that education, people's hands are tied now days. We are excited about working with the (SCAEC) and obtaining more training for our personnel too."

Read the full story in the Benton Courier.
<http://www.bentoncourier.com/content/courier-jail-ged-program-gives-hope-inmates>

Legislative Luncheon Held

A luncheon was held February 7, 2012, in the Capitol Hill Building (adjacent to the State Capitol) to communicate the program concerns, fiscal needs, and excellent work in Adult Education to legislators and policy-makers in the state. Approximately 35 legislators attended the luncheon along with administrators and adult education program staff.



The luncheon was sponsored by the Arkansas Adult Education Advisory Council, the Arkansas Association for Continuing and Adult Education, and the Arkansas Association for Administrators of Adult Education.

CALENDAR ITEMS

MARCH 14	AERIS 101 TRAINING (AALRC, LITTLE ROCK)
MARCH 28	ACE EXPO AND JOB FAIR (ST. BERNARD'S AUDITORIUM, JONESBORO)
MARCH 28-29	ADULT EDUCATION ADVISORY COUNCIL MEETING (JONESBORO)
MAY 8-9	ADULT EDUCATION ADMINISTRATOR'S MEETING (AALRC, LITTLE ROCK)

2014 GED® TASK FORCE FORMED

A 13 member task force has been formed to assist in providing the framework for delivering the new, computer-based GED® test. GED Testing Service understands the importance of jurisdictional circumstances and test-taker needs throughout the computer-based testing project; Arkansas' task force will complete intensive local planning which includes marketing strategies, instructional needs, and defining the footprint of GED® programs in the state.

With the leadership of Janice Hanlon, GED Administrator™, the task force will work with GED Testing Service and Pearson VUE to identify roadblocks and recommend the best solutions for delivering computer-based testing in the state.

Information on the 2014 GED® test and its content is available for download at www.GEDtestingservice.com/assessment.

